

Civil Aviation News

regard to the estimated costs. The prototype policy to be followed is a subject to be discussed and agreed with the Ministries after the Corporations have decided on the designs to be adopted, and the Committee will be responsible for negotiating production orders on behalf of the Corporations and to co-ordinate the contractual arrangements; later to co-ordinate negotiations with manufacturers after the contract is placed, including modifications and development procedure.

RUNWAYS AT PRESTWICK

THE work of strengthening the runways, aprons and taxi tracks at Prestwick airport began on April 12th, starting with runway 14/32. While the work on this runway is in progress it will be divided longitudinally and a continuous yellow line will divide the serviceable from the unserviceable portion the latter being identified by the usual white crosses. At night the dividing line will be marked by "goose-neck" flares and the normal lighting on the unserviceable portion will be extinguished. The M.C.A. have therefore laid down that between 1100 and 1630 hours G.M.T. until May 1st and thereafter from 1100 to 1800 hours G.M.T. the use of the main runway will be restricted to aircraft having obtained special permission in specified emergencies. Pilots are requested to use the subsidiary 08/26 runway when wind considerations are favourable or to use the airfield at Heathfield in order that the work at Prestwick may continue without interruption.

STAR TIGER INQUIRY

CONDUCTED by Lord Macmillan and with Professor A. A. Hall and Captain J. W. G. James as assessors the court of inquiry into the loss of the B.S.A.A. aircraft Tudor IV opened on April 12th, and was continuing at the beginning of this week. Many witnesses have been heard, including Air Vice-Marshal D. Bennett, who has suggested sabotage might have been the cause of the accident. Legal representatives are appearing for the United States Government and the United States Civil Aeronautics Board, the Portuguese Government, the Radio Officers' Union, Rolls-Royce, B.S.A.A., the Sperry Gyroscope Company, A. V. Roe and Company, the Air Registration Board, Lady Coningham, and the relatives of ten other passengers. Watching briefs are held on behalf of the Association of Scientific Workers and the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators.

ICELANDIC AIRPORT

KEFLAVIK Airport, known as Meeks Field during the war, is an important refuelling base for transatlantic aircraft when weather conditions will not permit a direct flight between the U.K. and North America. During a recent nine months aircraft belonging to A.O.A., T.C.A., B.O.A.C., K.L.M., S.A.S., Air France and Iceland Airways made 928 movements through the airport involving the handling of 16,200 passengers, 580,000 lb of cargo and 541,000 lb of mail. It is rather

interesting that 2,600 of those passengers embarked in Keflavik and 4,500 flew into Iceland through the airport; the remainder were passing through. The number has increased in recent months to about 2,000 passengers and 185 aircraft a month. Apart from casual services three eastbound and four westbound services a week are operated on schedule by A.O.A. The company will increase the west bound services to five on May 15th.

P.A.W.A. CONSTELLATION CRASH

ON the morning of April 15th a Pan American Airways Constellation on a routine flight from Karachi to New York crashed on the approach to landing at Shannon at 02.15 hrs. B.S.T. At that time visibility was between 2 and 3 miles, with fog patches around the airport reducing visibility in places to about 250ft. The cloud base was given as 400ft. At the first attempt to land the aircraft overshot the runway, went round again and attempted another landing using I.L.S. When on the approach and 600 yards from the end of the runway the aircraft struck a 3ft stone wall which wrecked the undercarriage. At a point farther on the port outer engine was torn out and the petrol tanks were punctured. After skidding along the ground for a further 250 yards the aircraft came to rest and almost immediately the petrol tanks exploded and the aircraft was burnt out. Of the 26 passengers and six crew there was one survivor, who can only account for his escape by the floor opening up and allowing a sufficiently large hole through which he could crawl.

The Civil Aeronautics Board have subsequently stated that the aircraft was in normal contact by radio with the Control tower until within about a minute of the accident, and no mechanical trouble was reported.

ACCIDENT AT NUTTS CORNER

ON October 3rd a Lancastrian chartered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries from Skyways, Ltd., for transporting milk from Belfast to Speke, swung off the runway at Nutts Corner airfield when taking off, and struck the south bank of the River Cromlin; although fire broke out no lives were lost, but the pilot, who was released by the radio officer before the fire took hold, was injured; the first officer was seriously injured but managed to crawl from the wrecked fuselage to safety. At the time of the take-off visibility was between 50 and 100 yards and the pilot was assisted by instruments. In the opinion of the Chief Inspector of Accidents the cause of the mishap was that, when changing from "visual" to instruments the pilot lost directional control of his aircraft allowing it to swing off the runway and bounce into the air before full flying speed had been attained. Tests subsequently carried out have shown that the proximity of milk churns to magnetic compasses induce deviations of these instruments and it is therefore recommended that check-swings should be carried out whenever ferrous metals are stowed near magnetic compasses.

BREVITIES

From May 15th until June 5th Aer Lingus will operate on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays a service between the Isle of Man and Dublin with Dakota aircraft. From June 5th there will be a daily service, including Sundays, leaving Dublin at 11 o'clock in the morning and returning from Ronaldsway at 12.15 p.m. The journey takes 40 minutes. Fares will be £3 single and £5 8s return.

North Sea Air Transport has increased its fleet of aircraft for charter purposes and has purchased three Rapides, two Aerovans, one Lockheed 14, one Lockheed 12 and an Avro XIX. The company already has four Rapides, a Proctor, a Messenger, an Auster and an Anson. I. W.C. I. H. Edwards, D.F.C., has recently joined the company as sales manager with headquarters at 11, Upper Grosvenor Street, W.1.

Air Commodore W. H. Primrose has resigned from his appointment in the Ministry of Civil Aviation but will maintain his interest in helicopter development. He has been assisting Sir Frederick Bowhill, chief technical adviser to the Ministry, on special duties connected with the development and study of helicopters, freight services and the carriage of mail by air. The Air Com-



FAR FROM HOME: A Dakota belonging to Orient Airways from Calcutta, at Keflavik Airport, Iceland. In front of the terminal building in the background a B.O.A.C. Liberator is refuelling.